

Surviving Life's Storms - Ephesians 2:19-22 – February 25th, 2018

- I've titled today's teaching, "Surviving Life's Storms."
- This because, here in our text, the Apostle Paul writes about what I would argue is one of the most important truths in the Bible.
- Namely, that of Jesus Christ being the foundation upon which our Christian life is built by hearing and heeding the Word of God.
- In verses nineteen and twenty, Paul begins where it must always begin and that's with the foundation being built upon the Lord.
- Then, in verse twenty-one, he goes from the foundation being built upon the Lord, to the building up, as the temple in the Lord.
- Then, in verse twenty-two, with the foundation built upon the Lord, and the building up in the Lord, we are indwelt by the Lord.
- As such, that building can now survive anything that comes against it by virtue of the chief cornerstone upon which it was built.
- It's important to understand just how essential the cornerstone was in establishing the foundation of any structure that was built.
- It was so crucial it was positioned at the extreme corner in order to bind the other stones together for stability and dependability.

One commentator defined and explained the significance of the cornerstone this way, ...[Cornerstone] literally means at the tip of the angle. It refers to the capstone or binding stone that holds the whole structure together ... often the royal name was inscribed on it. In the East it was considered to be even more important than the foundation."

- I'm sure you know where I'm going with this so I'll get right to the point and say that Jesus Christ is that chief cornerstone for us.

1 Peter 2:4-8 — 4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." 7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," 8 and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

- I would submit absent the chief cornerstone, which is Christ, it's just a matter of time before everything comes crashing down.
- It's not if, it's when, and while any structure may appear to be sound outwardly, what will determine its fate is what's inwardly.
- So too is this true with every single one of us outwardly, that is until the storms of life hit and reveal the foundation inwardly.

Luke 6:46-49 — 46 "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? 47 Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. 49 But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

- The question that we should be asking ourselves is this; "Which of the two foundations have we built our Christian lives upon?"
- In answering this question we would all do well to consider how that sometimes it may actually take a storm to know which one.
- By that I mean it would behoove us to not wait until the storm hits to expose that our foundation was built upon shifting sand.
- Now the question becomes how do we build our lives upon the rock solid foundation of Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone?
- By taking heed to, and being a doer of, God's Word, as the Apostle Peter wrote in his epistle and Jesus taught in His parable.

James 1:22-24 - Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

- One of the best examples of surviving a perilous storm vis-à-vis taking heed to the Word of God is found in the book of Acts 27.

Acts 27:20-25 — 20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved. 21 After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. 22 But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. 23 Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me 24 and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' 25 So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.

- In closing, I just want to encourage those who today find themselves in a perilous storm and say that you will survive in the end.
- While it may not seem like it now, and you like Paul and Luke have "finally given up all hope," you will see how God will do this.
- God, as only He can, and always does, will have the final word in that trial in your life, and it will be for your good and His glory.